



PRESS RELEASE HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 5, 2023

Press contact:

Hannah Kurowski, House Majority Office
Hannah.Kurowski@oregonlegislature.gov

Tess Seger, Senate Majority Office
Tess.Seger@oregonlegislature.gov

Bipartisan Bills Supporting Rural Oregon Stall as Senate Republicans Abandon Their Districts

Millions in federal dollars, broadband access, workforce housing, and investments in small businesses at risk as Senate Republicans ignore Oregon voters.

SALEM, Ore. - Bills that would bolster rural economic development stall as Senate Republicans continue to not show up to work in an effort to block legislation that would protect and expand abortion rights and gender-affirming care. In Oregon, [78% of counties](#) do not have an abortion provider and many cannot afford care.

In addition to the [\\$67 Million Bipartisan Rural Infrastructure and Economic Development Budget](#), Senate Republicans are blocking bills that would expand entrepreneurial and workforce opportunities for communities in their own districts. Legislation would attract private investments, support workforce housing, boost agricultural industries, fund county fairs, support small businesses and more.

Oregon could also be missing out on over \$700 million in federal funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act and American Rescue Plan Capital Projects to improve broadband service, infrastructure, device access, and digital skills training in order to move Oregon closer to our digital equity goals.

HB 3211 facilitates the replacement of Oregon's most seismically-vulnerable dams. The Big Creek Dams in Newport serve tourism, the fishing industry, and climate research. Without this bill, Oregon could lose \$60 million in federal dollars and have a devastating impact on Oregon's central coast economy.

"These bills support Oregon's small, rural towns, all of which have big aspirations. We cannot leave rural Oregon behind," said [Representative David Gomberg](#) (D-Lincoln & Western

Benton/Lane Counties), a rural coastal legislator and former small business owner. “Senate Republicans need to show up and vote--they need to fight for the needs of their districts who are counting on them to deliver.”

“Growing up in rural Oregon, I saw firsthand the incredible potential of our rural communities and the struggle that so many families worked hard to overcome,” **said [Senator Wlnsvey Campos \(D-Aloha\)](#)**. “We now have an opportunity to invest in communities across Oregon, and our rural communities cannot afford for us to let it pass by.”

Developed by a group of bipartisan legislators, the proposal builds off of the successful [\\$100 million bipartisan rural infrastructure package](#) passed last year.

Among the bills at risk that would support rural Oregon include:

- [HB 3317](#): Establishes Wallowa Rural and Recreational Economic Development Board to implement strategies for investments in workforce housing, workforce development and economic development in Wallowa County.
- [HB 3211](#): Facilitates the replacement of the Big Creek Dams relied on by our fishing industry, visitor industry, and research industry on the central coast.
- [HB 3201](#): An important step towards a robust and sustainable broadband system, this creates a new process for setting speed standards through the engagement of the Oregon Broadband Advisory Council and stakeholders. This will connect communities to the critical services they need to work, go to school, get health care and more.
- [HB 2510](#): Funding for County Fairs to support this industry and local tourism economies.
- [HB 3382](#): Affords for the modernization of shipping channels to support good-paying jobs, economic development, and sustainable infrastructure on the Coast.
- [HB 2062](#): Extends sunset for property tax exemption or deferral for industrial site improvements in rural areas.
- [HB 2459](#): Funding for venues and cultural organizations. Some of this money is distributed to venues and organizations in rural areas.
- [HB 2023](#): Provides grants to local governments to fund youth sporting events.
- [SB 138](#): Extends the sunset for property tax exemption or deferral for newly constructed industrial improvements in rural areas.
- [SB 1038](#): Directs Business Oregon to award grants to rodeo organizations based in communities with a population of 12,000 or less to fund capital projects.

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